

EMC SAN Hardware and Software Maintenance

JUSTIFICATION FOR AN EXCEPTION TO FAIR OPPORTUNITY

1. Contracting Activity: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Office of Acquisition Operations
Technology Acquisition Center
23 Christopher Way
Eatontown, New Jersey 07724
2. Description of Action: This proposed action is for a firm-fixed price task order to be issued under the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Solutions for Enterprise-Wide Procurement (SEWP) V Governmentwide Acquisition Contract (GWAC) for continuous hardware/software maintenance and technical support for brand name EMC Storage Area Network (SAN) equipment and related software / hardware peripherals for equipment located in Hines, Illinois (IL) and Martinsburg, West Virginia(WV).
3. Description of the Supplies or Services: VA, Office of Information and Technology, Enterprise Infrastructure Engineering (EIE), Enterprise Health Systems requires continuous hardware/software maintenance and technical support for brand name EMC Storage Area Network (SAN) equipment and related software / hardware peripherals for equipment located in Hines, IL and Martinsburg, WV. The maintenance services required include EMC's standard Continuous Coverage Preventive Maintenance (CCPM) agreement, 24/7 on-site support with a four-hour target response time; 24/7 multilingual telephone support with priority call handling, 24/7 access to online resources and system upgrades, and EMC secure remote support monitoring. The period of performance shall be October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017.
4. Statutory Authority: The statutory authority permitting this exception to fair opportunity is Section 41 U.S.C 4106(c)(2) as implemented by Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 16.505(b)(2)(i)(B) entitled, "Only one awardee is capable of providing the supplies or services required at the level of quality required because the supplies or services ordered are unique or highly specialized."
5. Rationale Supporting Use of Authority Cited Above: Based on market research, as described in section 8 of this justification, it was determined that limited competition is viable among authorized resellers of the required EMC hardware/software maintenance and technical support. OIT ESE currently owns and utilizes EMC DMX4 SAN systems in its infrastructure for its network storage solution. This solution supports VA enterprise-level operations between disparate sites. The system operates utilizing microcode and middleware applications that are proprietary to EMC. The microcode is firmware coding that controls the devices as well as the interoperability of the like type manufacturer devices. This code is essential to providing the CCPM and the required support, specifically the system upgrades and secure remote support monitoring. Therefore, only EMC or an authorized reseller which has access to the proprietary microcode and middleware applications have

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the ability to meet all of VA's maintenance requirements. Without this maintenance and support the devices required connect to the EMC DMX4 SAN systems would not connect and the information stored would not be available to the enterprise application servers utilizing the online storage systems.

6. Efforts to Obtain Competition: Market research was conducted, details of which are in section 8 of this justification. This effort did not yield any additional sources that can meet the Government's requirements. It was determined that limited competition is viable among authorized resellers for the required brand name EMC brand name hardware/software maintenance and technical support. In accordance with FAR 5.301 and 16.505(b)(2)(ii)(D), notice of award for this action will be synopsisized and this justification will be made publicly available on the Federal Business Opportunities Page within 14 days of award. In accordance with FAR 16.505(a)(4)(iii)(A), this justification will be posted with the request for quotation on the NASA SEWP V GWAC to notify interested parties.
7. Actions to Increase Competition: The Government will continue to conduct market research to ascertain if there are changes in the marketplace that would enable future actions to be fully competed.
8. Market Research: The Government's technical experts conducted market research in August of 2016 to ascertain if any other sources could provide the required hardware and software maintenance. Specifically the Government's technical experts researched the following vendors to determine if they could support and maintain the EMC equipment: Dell Storage, DSG Storage Inc., NEC Corporation, and Zetera Corp. Although these vendors offer similar hardware/software maintenance and technical support only EMC or an authorized reseller are capable of providing the hardware/software maintenance and technical support that meet the Government's requirements due to the proprietary nature of the microcode and middleware applications as described in paragraph 5 above.

Additionally, market research was conducted in August 2016 by utilizing the NASA SEWP V Provider Lookup Tool to determine whether the required brand name EMC hardware/software maintenance and technical support was available from NASA SEWP V GWAC holders. The results of the search found numerous resellers that could possibly meet VA's needs, including 21 Of the resellers, 14 are Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Businesses. Therefore, limited competition is anticipated.

9. Other Facts: None